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STANFORD, CALIF
AGENCY RECRUITS COLLEGE STUDENTS
BY LORETTA NOFFSINGER

The gray-suited man discreetly sizing up the engineering and computer science students Thursday wasn't just any campus recruiter; he was looking for candidates to replenish the ranks of the Central Intelligence Agency.

"Are you interested in the agency?" Henry Concha, the stylish-looking recruiter for the CIA, asked the Stanford University students who arrived for interviews in the dark-suited garb of spies or in the devil-may-care, untucked-shirt look of undercover agents.

On a table in the hall of Tresidder Union were books to inspire: William Colby's "Honorable Men, My Life in the CIA"; Ray S. Cline's "The CIA Under Reagan, Bush and Casey," and William Hood's "Mole," the "true story of the first Russian intelligence officer recruited by the CIA."

Most of the Stanford students said they were not hoping for the life of a covert operative.

"Going covert is not my deal," said Gary Robinson, 22, of Las Vegas, Nev. A mechanical engineering major, Robinson said CIA employees "are the best people in the world as far as analysis goes. They need good people."

But the CIA at Stanford wasn't saying how many they need, or even how many they had.

The two-day recruitment effort at Stanford netted about 80 interviews and follows recruitment last November at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Similar efforts are planned in the next two months at the University of Illinois and the University of Indiana.

Also on Thursday, more than a dozen students and one faculty member barricaded a stairway at Wesleyan University's Career Planning Center in Middletown, Conn., trying to discourage job-seeking students from interviewing with two CIA recruiters. Sixteen students signed up for the 26 slots open for the CIA interviews; the interviewing students had to climb over the protesters.

John Dohring, deputy director for CIA employment, said the CIA recruiters were spending two days at Stanford "... because (it) is a top-flight university."

Students' perception of the agency is "much better" compared with five years ago, said Dohring.

"I think students are much more attuned to world events and the need for a strong intelligence organization," he said. "We have been more open about the agency" and eliminating the "misperceptions. We are not a super-secret agency," he said.

Talk of spies, in fact, brought some annoyance from the CIA officials on campus, including that of an analyst who was asked if he were an agent. He wouldn't identify himself.

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